



### Public Meeting/Hearing

EPA welcomes comments from community residents. The Agency will hold a public information session and public hearing January 8, 2003, at:

Crowne Plaza Detroit  
8000 Merriman Road  
Romulus, Michigan

5-7 p.m. Information Session  
7-9 p.m. Public Hearing

### Comments Welcome

You can also write to EPA with comments. Letters must be postmarked by January 22, 2003 and sent to:

Sally Swanson  
Acting UIC Branch Chief  
U.S. EPA Region 5  
Underground Injection  
Control Branch (WU-16J)  
77 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60604-3590.

### Details Available

Details of the exemption proposal can be found in information repositories at:

Romulus Public Library  
11121 Wayne Road  
Romulus, Mich.

Taylor Community Library  
12303 Pardee Road  
Taylor, Mich.

Henry Ford Centennial Library  
16301 Michigan Avenue  
Dearborn, Mich.

On line at:  
[www.epa.gov/region5/water/uic/pubpdf/factsheet.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/uic/pubpdf/factsheet.pdf)

## Land Disposal Restrictions Exemption Proposed

### Environmental Disposal Systems, Inc.

Romulus, Michigan

December 2002

EPA Region 5 intends to allow Environmental Disposal Systems Inc. of Birmingham, Mich., to inject hazardous wastes into two deep injection wells. The wells are at 28470 Citrin Drive in Romulus, Mich. The company did extensive tests on its wells and the underground rock formations. The hazardous wastes could include heavy metals such as mercury, chromium and nickel as well as solvents and acids.

Injecting wastes deep underground is a proven way of disposal. Companies applying for an exemption to the ban on land disposal of hazardous wastes have to meet a tough standard. Among other things, EDS tested its wells; examined the rocks, liquid and forces underground; and obtained information about other wells in the area. EDS showed the wastes should stay confined three-quarters of a mile underground for at least 10,000 years. So EPA plans to issue an exemption for the two wells. EPA is accepting comments on its proposal. Anyone can write to EPA using the address in the box on the left.

### Hazardous Wastes Will Remain 3,000 Feet Underground

Rock that contains lots of tiny holes holding liquid is called porous rock. Deep underneath the ground this porous rock forms a big reservoir that can hold billions of gallons of hazardous wastes. This reservoir at its most shallow will be the length of 12 football fields below the surface. Geologists, who are scientists who study the earth, say the wastes will probably travel sideways from the well bottom about 4 ½ miles in all directions. The chemicals may move as much as 10 miles sideways from the wells in the south-southeastern direction. But after that distance, the wastes will be so diluted they won't be dangerous anymore.

Here are more well facts:

- ✓ Wastes will be injected down the wells at an average rate of 166 gallons per minute. Assuming the wells work 24 hours a day, that adds up to more than 7 million gallons a month.
- ✓ Some 591 types of hazardous wastes can be injected down the deep wells. EDS will be hired by plants to get rid of their wastes for them.
- ✓ The wells consist of thick metal pipes imbedded in a layer of cement to prevent leaks. A replaceable tube inside the metal pipes will carry the wastes.

- ✓ The exemption will allow EDS to operate the wells for 20 years. The company would

- ✓ have to apply for another exemption if it wanted to continue using the wells.
- ✓ Monitoring gear will spot leaks and quickly alert EDS workers.
- ✓ Inspectors will visit the wells several times a year.
- ✓ Geologists have learned the earth is composed of layers of rocks and dirt. EDS ran a computer program to show how the wastes will move around in these layers. The computer used worst-case numbers. Those figures showed the chemicals won't come within 2,000 feet of drinking water.
- ✓ A company called Sun Pipe Line wants to operate injection and extraction wells a half mile from the EDS site. However, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality denied an extraction well permit. Sun Pipe Line is appealing. If Sun does operate an extraction well, EPA will end the EDS exemption.

### **Why You Won't See These Wastes Ever Again**

- ✓ EDS had to prove that its hazardous substances would not move to the surface or seep into underground drinking water for at least 10,000 years. Experts figure after that long many of the chemicals will have turned harmless.
- ✓ The company also had to show that its wastes will be covered by a "bleed-off" layer. That means if the wastes do travel farther than expected they will spread out in this porous rock that serves as a safety valve. There also must be a "containment" layer above the wastes. This is a solid type of rock that isn't very porous, which will tend to cap the wastes if they get that far.
- ✓ Earthquakes are rare and fairly weak in the area. The well shafts are flexible and should be able to withstand vibrations.

If you need more information about the wells, you may call or write:

Harlan Gerrish, Geologist & Lead Petition Reviewer  
Underground Injection Control Branch (WU-16J)  
77West Jackson Blvd  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Phone: (312) 886-2939  
Toll free: (800) 621-8431, ext. 62939

**NOTE:** This fact sheet is intended only as a plain-language announcement of EPA's 37-page *Notice of Intent to Grant an Exemption ...*. If you want to read the details of that proposal, you can find the *Notice* at the Romulus and Taylor public libraries as well as the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn. The *Notice* is also online at: [www.epa.gov/region5/water/uic/pubpdf/factsheet.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/uic/pubpdf/factsheet.pdf)